"Thank you," he said. Then he lapsed into silence and looked out of the window.

She allowed herself one quick glance before she turned to look out of her window. He was a bigger man than she had realised. Not only tall, but wide in the shoulders with that total impression of over-life-size which belongs to almost all great stage artists. From those stage-door glimpses she had not thought of him as having a slightly melancholy cast of countenance, but now he undoubtedly had. And because she thought he might be glad of something other than his own thoughts on the occasion of his first return to London since his wife's death, she said presently, "Mr. Deane had to go to Paris to see Madame Torelli."

"Oh—Torelli?" He turned immediately, with an expression of half-amused interest. "How is she?"

"Marvellous. Is she ever anything else?"

"No. That incredible stamina and vitality! They're as breathtaking as her voice. Monica—my wife—used to say . . ." He stopped suddenly, as though he had forgotten how that sentence finished.

"Mr. Deane says it's her peasant stock," observed Mary smoothly, as though no break had occurred in the conversation.

"Yes. That's it," he agreed. "A streak of the peasant—something really earthy—stands us all in good stead. I'm always glad of my good dash of peasant stock."

"Was that the Russian grandmother?" Mary asked with interest.

"Yes." He smiled. "How did you know?"

"I read an article about you once. Did you know her?"

"Oh, yes!" Suddenly he looked genuinely interested, and like a different person. "She was a singer, too, in her youth . . ."

THEY WERE STILL talking when the car slid smoothly to a standstill outside the entrance to the Gloria. He looked up then and said, a little uncertainly, "Oh—the Gloria . . ."

"Yes. Mr. Deane said to tell you that we'd got your usual suite. He said . . ."

"But I don't want the usual suite!" There was no mistaking the harsh certainty of that.

In a second she realised why. *Of course* he wanted nothing familiar—nothing to remind him of that other time.

"You don't have to have the usual suite," she said calmly. "I'll go in and change the reservation now. Just see that Carter takes out all the baggage."

Carter would have been furious if he had known that anyone was casting such a slur on his efficiency, but Mary was doing no such thing, of course. She was merely giving Nicholas Brenner a reason for waiting outside while she slipped into the hotel and changed that hideously tactless reservation.

She accomplished it in a matter of minutes, and without fuss or explanation.

Nicholas Brenner thanked her, briefly but approvingly, and then said, "There's a rehearsal for principals this evening, I see. Shall you be there?"

She opened her mouth to say that no such suggestion had been made. But something far more than her immediate desire to go—some unerring instinct—made her reply that if he would like her to be there then she certainly would.

"I should like you to be there," he said without elaboration. "Pick me up at five."

She promised to do so and went out to rejoin Carter.

Continued on page 47

Budget cookery

A COLLECTION OF CAKES

Delicious tea-times are in store for you with our tempting range of really economical recipes

CHOCOLATE BUTTERFLY CAKES

Makes 16

For the Cakes

4 oz. margarine

4 oz. caster sugar

2 large eggs

3½ oz. self-raising flour

½ oz. cocoa powder

For the Buttercream

2 oz. margarine

4 oz. sifted icing sugar

½ oz. cocoa powder

16 paper cases

Beat the margarine until it is soft and light. Add the caster sugar and cream the two ingredients until they are light and fluffy in both colour and texture. Beat the eggs, then add them gradually to the creamed mixture, beating well between each addition. Sieve together the flour and cocoa powder then, using a metal spoon, fold them into the mixture lightly and quickly.

Stand the cake cases on a baking tray and divide the mixture between them. Bake the cakes on the centre shelf of a moderately hot oven, gas mark 5 or 375 degrees, for about twenty minutes, or until they feel springy to the touch. Leave them on a wire tray to cool.

The Buttercream

Beat the margarine until it is light and fluffy, then gradually beat in the sifted icing sugar and cocoa powder.

When the cakes are cold, slice off the tops and spread the cut surfaces with a heaped teaspoonful of the buttercream. Cut each lid in half and press the two halves into the buttercream to form butterfly wings.

FAMILY FRUIT LOAF

14 oz. plain flour

2 level teaspoonfuls baking powder

1 level teaspoonful bicarbonate of soda

2 oz. lard

2 oz. margarine

8 oz. caster sugar

6 oz. cleaned currants

2 oz. cleaned sultanas

1 oz. mixed peel

½ pint soured milk, or ½ pint milk soured with 1 dessertspoonful of vinegar

A 2 lb. loaf tin

Brush the tin with melted fat, line the base with a piece of greaseproof paper cut to fit and brush the paper lining also.

Sift the flour, baking powder and bicarbonate of soda into a mixing bowl. Add the fats and rub them in until evenly distributed. Stir in the sugar, with the dried fruit, then mix in the milk to make a soft, dropping consistency.

Turn the mixture into the tin and bake the loaf on the centre shelf of a moderate oven, gas mark 4 or 350 degrees, for an hour, then reduce the heat to gas mark 3 or 325 degrees for a further hour, or until a skewer pushed into the centre of the loaf comes out clean. If any mixture adheres to the skewer, cook the loaf for a few more minutes. Cover the top with a piece of brown paper if it is becoming too dark.

Keep the loaf for a day in an airtight tin before serving it sliced and buttered.

Although the Family Fruit Loaf keeps very well in an airtight tin, any stale slices can be served toasted with butter.

More recipes overleaf

Coffee

VIENNA CAKES

Makes 9 to 10

6 oz. softened margarine
2 oz. sifted icing sugar
6 oz. self-raising flour
A pinch of salt
A few drops vanilla essence
A little extra sifted icing sugar
3 tablespoonfuls raspberry jam
A No. 10 large star pipe with bag attached
10 paper cake cases

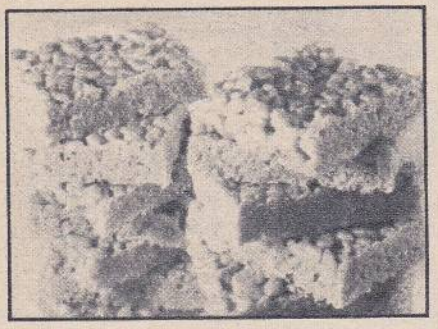
Beat the margarine until it is soft and fluffy, add the icing sugar and beat the ingredients together until light and creamy. Sift the flour and salt, then gradually beat them into the creamed mixture with the vanilla essence to form a soft dough.

Spoon the dough into the piping bag, and arrange the cake cases on a baking tray. Starting in the centre of each case, pipe the mixture in a spiral, until the edges are reached and the cases full. If you find the paper cake cases slip as you pipe, brush the tray with a little melted fat so that the cases stick firmly to the surface.

Bake the Vienna Cakes on the centre shelf of a moderate oven, gas mark 4 or 350 degrees, for twenty to twenty-five minutes, then leave them to cool.

Just before serving, dust the surface of each with icing sugar and spoon a little jam in the centre.

Note: To keep the cakes in good shape during cooking, you could stand the cases in patty tins rather than on a baking tray.



TOFFEE KRISPIES

Makes 24

4 oz. margarine
4 oz. slab of creamy toffee or loose-wrapped toffees
4 oz. marshmallows
4 oz. Rice Krispies
A Swiss Roll tin, 12 inches by 8 inches

Brush the tin with a little cooking oil. Put the margarine into a large pan, break the slab of toffee into pieces and add them (or the loose toffees) to the pan, with the marshmallows.

Over a low heat, slowly melt and blend these ingredients together. Remove the pan from the heat and carefully stir in the Rice Krispies.

Turn the mixture into the tin and press it down with the back of a wooden spoon. Leave it on one side to cool and set, then cut into 24 pieces before serving.

A pretty plate-full of Vienna Cakes—delicious with a cup of tea.

COFFEE SPONGE

2 large eggs
2 oz. caster sugar
2 oz. plain flour
1 level tablespoonful coffee powder
For the Filling and Icing
3 tablespoonfuls apricot jam
4 oz. sifted icing sugar
1 level dessertspoonful coffee powder
1 tablespoonful chocolate spread
7½-inch round sponge tin
A greaseproof paper icing bag

Brush the tin with melted fat and line the base with a circle of greaseproof paper cut to fit. Brush the lining also.

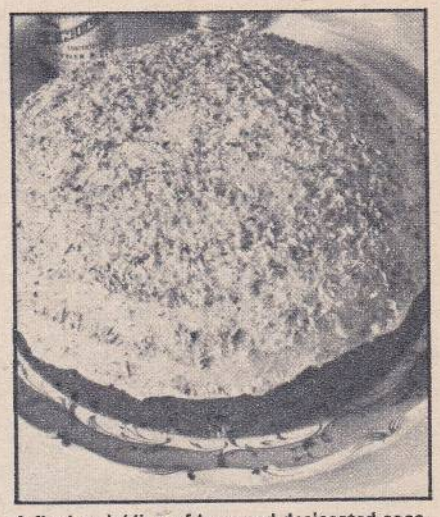
Break the eggs into a bowl, add the sugar, then suspend the bowl over a pan of hot water and whisk the two ingredients together until they are really thick and creamy—the whisk should leave a definite trail when lifted out of the mixture. Remove the bowl from the heat and whisk the mixture for a further few minutes to allow it to cool slightly.

Sift together the flour and coffee powder then, using a metal spoon, very carefully fold them into the mixture as lightly and quickly as possible. Turn the mixture into the prepared tin and bake it on the centre shelf of a moderate oven, gas mark 4 or 350 degrees, for about twenty minutes, or until it starts to shrink away from the sides of the tin. Run a knife around the inside edge of the tin, turn the cake on to a wire tray to cool and remove the greaseproof paper.

The Filling and Icing

When the cake is quite cold, cut it in half horizontally and spread the centre with the jam. Sift the icing sugar and coffee powder into a small bowl and mix in enough cold water to make an icing that just forms its own level. Spoon the icing over the cake and spread it to the sides. If any should run down the sides, leave it to dry before scraping it off with a sharp knife.

Spoon the chocolate spread into the paper icing bag, snip off the end and pipe the word "coffee" across the top of the cake, as illustrated.



A final sprinkling of browned desiccated coconut and Spice Cake is ready to serve.

SPICE CAKE

For the Cake
4 oz. plain flour
A pinch of salt
½ level teaspoonful bicarbonate of soda
½ level teaspoonful mixed spice
½ level teaspoonful ground cinnamon
2 oz. margarine
2 oz. granulated sugar
1 large egg
1 level dessertspoonful golden syrup
1 tablespoonful warm water
For the Icing
2 oz. butter
4 oz. sifted icing sugar
A few drops vanilla essence
1 level tablespoonful desiccated coconut
A sandwich tin, 6 inches in diameter

Brush the tin with melted fat, line the base with a circle of greaseproof paper cut to fit and brush the paper lining also.

Sift the flour, salt, bicarbonate of soda, mixed spice and ground cinnamon on to a piece of paper.

Cream the margarine and sugar together until they are light and fluffy, beat in the egg and add the syrup. Carefully fold in the sifted dry ingredients with the warm water to give a dropping consistency.

Pour the mixture into the tin and smooth over the surface. Bake the cake on the centre shelf of a moderate oven, gas mark 4 or 350 degrees, for thirty to thirty-five minutes, or until it feels firm to the touch. Turn it on to a wire tray to cool and remove the greaseproof paper.

The Icing

Beat the butter until soft then gradually beat in the icing sugar and vanilla essence. Spread the icing over the top of the cake. Brown the coconut on a baking tray under a pre-heated grill, turning it occasionally so that it browns evenly. Leave the coconut to cool before sprinkling it over the icing. Press it lightly into the buttercream so that it adheres.

Serve the cake on a pretty plate.